

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

The claims are 13-20.

The above amendment is responsive to points set forth in the Official Action.

In this regard, new main claim 13 replaces previous claim 1 and incorporates the features from original claims 5 and 6 therein.

New claims 14-17 are based on previous claims 7-10, respectively, but depend on new claim 13. New claim 18 depends on claim 13 and recites 1,4-cyclohexanedimethanol divinyl ether as the component (C). Support is evident, e.g. from Example 1 on page 14 of the specification.

New independent claim 19 replaces previous claim 11 and also incorporates features from original claims 5 and 6 therein.

New claim 20 replaces previous claim 12 and depends on claim 19.

In new main claim 13, the polyvinyl ether compound as the component (C) is now defined as a polyvinyl ether compound represented by the formula of original claim 5, in which X is an n-valent organic residue derived from an alicyclic hydrocarbon compound by eliminating n hydrogen atoms. Also, see claim 6.

This definition of the component (C) as an alicyclic polyvinyl ether compound is further supported by the disclosure in lines 14 et seq. of paragraph [0026] of the present specification.

The significance of this amendment will be discussed below.

Claims 1 and 5-10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Oomori et al. (U.S. 5,976,760) in view of Watanabe et al. (U.S. 5,876,900).

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As the Official Action recognizes, Oomori does not teach the present polyvinyl ether compound.

This deficiency is said to be made up by Watanabe. However, Watanabe teaches the use of polyvinyl ether compounds in a different context, as pointed out in the previous Response. Moreover, as can be seen from the disclosure in column 7, lines 28 et seq.,

Watanabe does not appreciate the unobviously beneficial use of the presently recited alicyclic polyvinyl ether compounds.

In support of the unobviously beneficial use of the polyvinyl ether compounds, as now defined, in the presently recited positive-working photoresist composition, there is submitted herewith the Rule 132 Declaration of Kazuyuki Nitta, the first-named inventor herein.

In this Declaration, Comparative Experiments were undertaken by using an alicyclic polyvinyl ether compound representative of the present claims, i.e. 1,4-cyclohexanedimethanol divinyl ether, on one hand, and a linearly aliphatic polyvinyl ether compound on the other hand, as the component (C).

The unobvious advantages in terms of thermal flow behavior as well as critical pattern resolution can be obtained.

Thus, to the extent that the combined reference teachings constitute a *prima facie* case of obviousness, such is overcome by the foregoing amendments and remarks.

Claims 11 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Oomori et al. (U.S. 5,976,760) in view of Watanabe et al. (U.S. 5,876,900) and Jeoung et al. (U.S. 6,358,672).


This rejection is also respectfully traversed for reasons set forth above.

No further issues remaining, allowance of this application is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner has any comments or proposals for expediting prosecution, please contact undersigned at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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